(c) Malnutrition is a multi-faceted problem. In this regard, the Government have, *inter-alia*, taken various steps to improve agriculture production and the purchasing power of the people through income generating schemes. It also makes available the essential food items at subsidised rates through Public Distribution System. The Government is also implementing a number of schemes like Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme), Pradhan Mantri Grammodaya Yojana etc. for this purpose. The efforts are also being supplemented through supply of foodgrains to needy States by World Food Programme (WFP), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everwhere (CARE) etc.

Liver-related diseases

†2576. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that liver-related diseases are taking the shape of epidemic in the country and any national policy has not been evolved to control this disease;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the main reasons for increase in the liver-related diseases are lack of knowledge and awareness; and

(c) if so, the numbers of Hepatitis-B patients in the country alongwith the number of liver cancer cases and to what extent Government are serious about the treatment of these patients and the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) to (c) As per information available, the liver-related diseases such as Viral Hepatitis including Hepatitis-B reported for the year 2001 are less than those reported for the year 2000. Lack of awareness is also one of the reasons for liver-related diseases. The measures taken by the Government to control the spread of Hepatitis-B are as under:—

* Mandatory screening of all blood donations for HBsAG at Blood Banks.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

* Health education activities to promote safe sexual behaviour under the National AIDS Control Programme.
* Instructions have been issued to the Health Authorities for use of a sepatare sterile syringes and needles for each injection.
* Central Government Hospital personnel at risk to be immunised. State Governments have also been advised to take similar steps.

Development of Central Homoeopathic Research Institute Kurichi, Kerala

2577. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELARE be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position of the development plan of Central Homoeopathic Research Institute, Kurichi in Kottayam District of Kerala;

(b) whether the State Government has assigned 5 acres of land for the development of the Institute; and

(c) the reasons for the inordinate delay in the implementation of the development project?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) to (c) No steps could be taken to develop the institute as the State Government has not provided suitable piece of land so far.

Quality Assurance Agency for fast food centres

2578. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of fast-food centres are being set up in cities and towns in the country both by the indigenous entrepreneurs and the MNCs;

(b) whether it is also a fact that many of them are operating without proper permits and thereby seriously compromising the quality and hygeine;

(c) whether Government propose to create a special Quality Assurance Agency consisting of trained catering specialists to inspect and monitor the services of fast food centres sprouting all over the country in large number; and